

Keep your English
up to date 2



Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers



Phat



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Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

Phat

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Being cool

Aims: Listening skills – A short talk
Language – ‘Phat’ and other homonyms

Materials: Worksheet 1 – Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises,
Listening section 1
Worksheet 2 – Listening section 2
Worksheet 3 – Extra work: Vocabulary, language and discussion
Audio script – Available in teacher’s notes
Recording of the talk – Available online at bbclearningenglish.com

This plan was downloaded from:

bbclearningenglish.com/radio/specials/1130_uptodate2/page2.shtml

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LESSON STAGES

A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor David Crystal, an expert on the English language, and that the talk is about the way English is changing. This particular talk is about the word 'phat', although it is best not to tell students the word before they do the first listening.

B

Hand out **Student Worksheet 1**. Students do **Speaking, Exercise 1** in small groups or pairs.

C

Students do **Vocabulary, Exercise 2** - without dictionaries at first. Practise the pronunciation of the vocabulary, as they will hear it in the talk.

D

Students read **Listening: Section 1, Exercise 3** and then listen to Section 1 of the talk. They answer the questions 'a, b and c'.

Students listen again and do **Listening: Section 1, Exercise 4**.

E

Hand out **Student Worksheet 2**.

Students read **Listening: Section 2, Exercise 5** and then listen to Section 2 of the talk. They answer question 'a'.

F

Students try to answer **Listening: Section 2, Exercise 6**. They listen again to Section 2 to check/complete their answers.

G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**.

For the vocabulary exercise, give the students copies of the audio script and play the complete talk as they read.

The language work focuses on other homophones.

The final discussion activity uses some of the language from the language work (Exercise 8).

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AUDIO SCRIPTS

Listening Section 1

Now, this is a difficult one for speech, 'phat', not 'fat'. You can usually tell the difference because 'fat' is for animates: people and animals. 'Phat' is used with things or general states of affairs, people say, 'You know, that's a phat beat!' or 'It's very phat down by the river!'

Well, it sounds like a modern usage, doesn't it? It means, excellent, great, cool ... you know, it's phat down by the river, it's lovely to be down by the river.

Listening Section 2

As a word, it's been around since the early 1990s. It's from hip-hop slang. It originally meant, sexiness, real sexiness in a woman. Although, it had all sorts of etymologies, I wouldn't believe them all – I mean, one was, 'pretty, hot and tempting', phat, and there are some ruder etymologies as well, let me tell you.

You'll still encounter it, but the homophony, the fact that the two words sound the same – phat and fat – has made it ambiguous. I don't think it ever really caught on. I do hear the word around a lot in 2006, but I think it's on the way out. It's not phat, to say phat, anymore!

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ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY

Exercise 2

- a. **animates** things that move and have life
- b. **the beat** the rhythm of a piece of music
- c. **cool** fashionable and trendy
- d. **hip-hop** a style of popular music, closely connected to Afro-American culture
- e. **etymologies** the (possible) histories of a word
- f. **to encounter** to meet, see or find something

LISTENING: SECTION 1

Exercise 3

- a. 'phat' and 'fat'
- b. 'phat'
- c. 'excellent, great, cool'

Exercise 4

- a. True – 'fat' is for animates: people and animals'
- b. False – 'Phat' is used with things or general states of affairs.'
- c. True – 'it's phat down by the river, it's lovely to be down by the river.'

LISTENING: SECTION 2

Exercise 5

- a. iii. how attractive someone is

Exercise 6

- a. True – 'it had all sorts of etymologies, I wouldn't believe them all.'
- b. False – 'I don't think it ever really caught on.'
- c. False – 'It's not phat, to say phat, anymore!'

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EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

Exercise 7

- a. slang
- b. ruder
- c. caught on (to catch on)

LANGUAGE

Exercise 8a

- a. That music is too loud. **Turn it down!**
- b. Now the music is too quiet. **Turn it up !**
- c. Come on, **hurry up** or we'll be late.
- d. The death of his dog has really **got him down** - he's feeling really sad. I'm going to buy him a present in order to **cheer him up**.
- e. This music is too slow. Put on some dance music – we need to **liven up** this party.
- f. There are too many applications for the job. We need to **narrow them down** and make a short list.
- g. The government doesn't want people to panic, so it is **playing down** the danger from the hurricane.

Turn something down – to make something less loud

Turn something up - to make something louder

Hurry up – to increase your speed

Get someone down – to make you feel less happy, to make you feel sad.

Cheer (someone) up – to feel happier

Liven something up – to give something more energy and a better, livelier atmosphere

Narrow something down – to reduce the number of things on a list

Play something down – to say something is less serious than it really is

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WORKSHEET 1

SPEAKING

1. Discuss these questions with a partner

a. Which of these things are popular with teenagers in your country?

rap and hip-hop music	computer games	volunteering for charities
doing homework	going to nightclubs	football
table-tennis	reading novels	reading music magazines
wearing suits	wearing hoodies	classical music
chatting on the internet	smoking	owning a mobile phone

b. Which of the things above do teenagers think are cool or fashionable?

c. How does something become cool or fashionable; what makes something cool?

d. Do you think being cool is a good thing, or a waste of time?

VOCABULARY

2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| a. animates | the rhythm of a piece of music |
| b. the beat | fashionable and trendy |
| c. cool | the possible histories of a word |
| d. hip-hop | things that move and have life |
| e. etymologies | meet, see or find something |
| f. encounter something | a style of popular music, closely connected to Afro-American youth culture |

LISTENING SECTION 1

- 3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about a new word in English and answer these questions.**
- a. What are the two spellings of the similar sounding words?
 - b. Which spelling is the modern words?
 - c. What does the modern word mean?
- 4. Listen to Section 1 again and decide if the following statements are true or false, according to Professor Crystal.**
- a. ‘Fat’ describes living things.
 - b. ‘Phat’ describes feelings.
 - c. Professor Crystal talks about being near a river.

WORKSHEET 2

LISTENING SECTION 2

5. Listen to Section 2 of the talk and answer this question.

a. What did 'phat' originally describe?

- i. how intelligent someone is
- ii. how physically big someone is
- iii. how attractive someone is

6. Listen again to Section 2. Are the following sentences true or false?

- a.** The exact linguistic history of 'phat' is unknown.
- b.** Professor Crystal thinks the word became popular with everyone.
- c.** Professor Crystal thinks it is still cool to say 'phat'.

WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

7. Find the phrases in the text that have the following meanings.

- a. the informal or non-standard language
- b. less polite or sexier
- c. to become popular

LANGUAGE

8a. ‘Phat’ and ‘fat’ are homophones – they have the same sound, but different spellings and different meanings. Choose the correct homophone in the sentences below.

- a. ‘I bought a new pair of ____ yesterday’ (**genes/jeans**)
- b. He ____ the ball high into the air. (**threw/through**)
- c. The lawyers met in front of the ____ to discuss the case. (**caught/court**)
- d. ‘Did you ____ anything at the shops?’ (**buy/bye**)
- e. The ____ is a national symbol of Wales. (**leak/leek**)
- f. ‘Speak up! I can’t ____ you.’ (**hear/here**)
- g. You’re not ____ to smoke inside the building. (**allowed/aloud**)
- h. ‘I ____ a lot of mistakes in the exam.’ (**maid/made**)
- i. Do not alight from the train until it is stationary. (**stationary/stationery**)
- j. ‘Did you give them ____ money back?’ (**there/their/they’re**)
- k. ‘Have you read Professor Crystal’s book?’ (**red/read**)
- l. You need to ____ speaking English every day. (**practice/practise**)

8b Write sentences using the homophones that you did not use in 8a.

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DISCUSSION

9. Discuss these questions with your partner.

- a. Are our personalities determined by our genes or by the way we are brought up?
- b. Have you ever visited a court?
- c. Have you been shopping recently? What did you buy?
- d. Do you know anyone who has a maid?
- e. When you were a child, what kind of things weren't you allowed to do by your parents?
- f. What was the last novel that you read? Did you like it?
- g. How often do you practise listening to English?
- h. Have you visited any other countries? How does life there compare with life here?